

I claim:

1. A method of preventing an initial hepatic encephalopathic episode in a person at risk for hepatic encephalopathic episodes comprising administering to the person a therapeutically effective amount of at least one phenyl butyrate compound in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle, wherein the compound comprises one or more of the group consisting of phenyl butyrate, phenyl acetate, sodium benzoate, glyceryl-tri (4 phenyl butyrate), phenylbutyrylglutamines, phenylalkanes, phenylalkenes, and their acids, alcohols, salts, amines, esters, ethers, glycerides, salts, derivatives, and metabolites.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the compound is administered orally.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the compound is administered in an amount from about 0.1 to about 15 g/m²/day.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein the compound is administered in an amount from about 1 to about 8 g/m²/ day.
5. The method of claim 2 wherein the compound is administered in an amount from about 3 to about 8 g/m²/ day.
6. The method of claims 2, 3, 4 or 5 wherein the compound comprises sodium phenyl butyrate.
7. The method of claims 2, 3, 4 or 5 wherein the compound comprises glyceryl-tri (4 phenyl butyrate).
8. The method of claims 2, 3, 4 or 5 wherein the compound comprises sodium benzoate.
9. The method of claims 2, 3, 4 or 5 wherein the compound comprises sodium phenyl acetate.
10. The method of claims 2, 3, 4 or 5 wherein the compound comprises sodium phenyl acetate and sodium benzoate.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein the compound is delivered parentally.
12. The method of claim 11, wherein the compound is administered in an amount of about 0.1 to about 15 g/m²/day.

13. The method of claim 11, when an initial loading dose of the compound of about 2 to about 13 g/m² is additionally administered to the person.
14. The method of claim 11, wherein the compound is administered in an amount of about 1 to about 8 g/m²/day.
15. The method of claim 11, wherein the compound is administer in an amount of about 3 to about 8 g/m²/day.
16. The method of claims 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15 wherein the compound comprises sodium phenyl butyrate.
17. The method of claims 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15 wherein the compound comprises glyceryl-tri (4 phenyl butyrate).
18. The method of claims 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15 wherein the compound comprises sodium benzoate.
19. The method of claims 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15 wherein the compound comprises sodium phenyl acetate.
20. The method of claim 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15 wherein the compound comprises sodium phenyl acetate and sodium benzoate.
21. A method of lessening severity of an initial hepatic encephalopathic episode in a person at risk for hepatic encephalopathic episodes comprising administering to the person a therapeutically effective amount of at least one phenyl butyrate compound in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle, wherein the compound comprises one or more of the group consisting of phenyl butyrate, phenyl acetate, sodium benzoate, glyceryl-tri (4 phenyl butyrate), phenylbutyrylglutamines, phenylalkanes, phenylalkenes, and their acids, alcohols, salts, amines, esters, ethers, glycerides, salts, derivatives, and metabolites and wherein the administering occurs before the hepatic encephalopathic episode.
22. A method of delaying an initial hepatic encephalopathic episode in a person at risk for hepatic encephalopathic episodes comprising administering to the person a therapeutically effective amount of at least one phenyl butyrate compound in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle, wherein the compound comprises one or more of the group consisting of phenyl butyrate, phenyl acetate, sodium benzoate, glyceryl-tri (4

phenyl butyrate), phenylbutyrylglutamines, phenylalkanes, phenylalkenes, and their acids, alcohols, salts, amines, esters, ethers, glycerides, salts, derivatives, and metabolites and wherein the administering occurs before the hepatic encephalopathic episode.

23. A method of lessening severity of a hepatic encephalopathic episode in a person at risk for hepatic encephalopathic episodes, wherein at least 12 weeks has passed since the person had a prior episode, comprising administering to the person a therapeutically effective amount of at least one phenyl butyrate compound in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle, wherein the compound comprises one or more of the group consisting of phenyl butyrate, phenyl acetate, sodium benzoate, glyceryl-tri (4 phenyl butyrate), phenylbutyrylglutamines, phenylalkanes, phenylalkenes, and their acids, alcohols, salts, amines, esters, ethers, glycerides, salts, derivatives, and metabolites and wherein the administering occurs before the hepatic encephalopathic episode.
24. A method of delaying a hepatic encephalopathic episode in a person at risk for hepatic encephalopathic episodes, wherein at least 12 weeks has passed since the person had a prior episode, comprising administering to the person a therapeutically effective amount of at least one phenyl butyrate compound in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle, wherein the compound comprises one or more of the group consisting of phenyl butyrate, phenyl acetate, sodium benzoate, glyceryl-tri (4 phenyl butyrate), phenylbutyrylglutamines, phenylalkanes, phenylalkenes, and their acids, alcohols, salts, amines, esters, ethers, glycerides, salts, derivatives, and metabolites and wherein the administering occurs before the hepatic encephalopathic episode.
25. A method of preventing a hepatic encephalopathic episode in a person at risk for hepatic encephalopathic episodes, wherein at least 12 weeks has passed since the person had a prior episode, comprising administering to the person a therapeutically effective amount of at least one phenyl butyrate compound in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle, wherein the compound comprises one or more of the group consisting of phenyl butyrate, phenyl acetate, sodium benzoate, glyceryl-tri (4 phenyl butyrate), phenylbutyrylglutamines, phenylalkanes, phenylalkenes, and their acids, alcohols, salts,

amines, esters, ethers, glycerides, salts, derivatives, and metabolites and wherein the administering occurs before the hepatic encephalopathic episode.